



Kazuo Takiguchi b.1953
Biomorphic sculpture,
Signed and dated 2001 with Tomobako
44 * 34.5cm * H 23cm

Takiguchi's rounded forms all have some sharp, jagged opening that pulls the viewer into the piece, so much so that one wants to look inside that black hole full of mystery. It's the empty space that actually gives the piece its shape.

Kazuo Takiguchi is an exceedingly sought after Kyoto artist, one of the heirs of the original Sodeisha movement.

He is, born and raised in Kyoto, studied with the famous potter Kiyomizu Rokubei followed by a brief time with Yagi Kazuo, one of the founders of the Sodeisha ceramic group in Kyoto whose members took a path in opposition to the folk art or craft movement, known as Mingei, as well as opposing, ironically, the aesthetic inherited from the tea masters in which rusticity and naturalness were the lynch pins.

Non-functionality in ceramic art was not only a goal but at the center of their credo. Also Takiguchi's work appears more abstract than functional, in keeping with the Sodeisha creed.

Years later he also studied at the Royal College of Arts, London, graduating in 1992.

The awards began rolling in 1985, with prizes at the Nihon Toge Ten National Ceramics Exhibition and the Nihon Shin Kogei Ten New Crafts Exhibition. The following year was the Chunichi Kokusai Toge Ten and Kyoto Prefectural Arts and Crafts Association Exhibition. From there the list grows exponentially, including the JCS award, one of the most coveted prizes of them all. And he has been collected by a number of important institutions. According to a description from the V&A Museum in London: "For Takiguchi Kazuo, the young Kyoto-based maker of the large stoneware vessel, the development of a personal sculptural idiom has been closely associated with the pioneering of a particular method of hand-building".

The technique involves preparing a large sheet of extremely thin clay that is then folded and joined in a dynamic sequence of movements into a structure immediately resembling that of the intended final form. In the mid-1980s, when Takiguchi first used the technique, he lifted the clay up from the floor. Because this limited him to rather box-like shapes he went on to develop a way of draping the clay over moulds made from loosely assembled components and making his forms upside down. The new method allowed him to achieve the greater sense of fullness that he sought. At the same time the possibility of rearranging the components of the moulds allowed him to experiment with a much wider range of shapes than before. Having made a basic form, Takiguchi uses a number of secondary techniques to give it definition and character. These include pushing the walls out from the inside, compressing them from the outside, and cutting and joining, sometimes with the addition or removal of segments of clay. He also develops his forms with the aim of creating an environment in which sculptures and surroundings are integrated into a single whole.

Ref. "New Forms, New Voices" from the Gitter-Yelen Collection

